

APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR COPYING RULES BETWEEN DEVICES

TECHNOLOGICAL FIELD

[0001] Example embodiments of the present invention relate generally to providing rules stored on one device to another device.

BACKGROUND

[0002] Devices exist for facilitating various user activities and, as such, come in many different sizes and shapes and have varying degrees of functionality. Some devices, such as sensors and other small form factor devices, for example, may not have an extensive user interface element. For example, in some cases, a sensor may only be equipped with a single button or a light emitting diode (LED) that function as the user interface element.

[0003] At the same time, a user may require several such devices to operate in the same manner in order to accomplish a particular task. Each device may thus be required to operate according to the same rules.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF EXAMPLE EMBODIMENTS

[0004] Accordingly, embodiments of an apparatus, method, and computer program product are described that can provide for rules that are applicable to one device, such as a sensor, to be applied to another device, such as another sensor, solely as a result of user interaction with those devices. In particular, embodiments of an apparatus for duplicating rules between devices may include at least one processor and at least one memory including computer program code. The at least one memory and the computer program code may be configured to, with the processor, cause the apparatus to at least detect a rule-copy action at a first device; identify a second device in response to the rule-copy action, wherein the second device is configured to operate according to at least one rule; and cause the at least one rule to be applied to the first device in response to detection of the rule-copy action, so as to configure the first device to operate according to the at least one rule.

[0005] In some cases, the at least one memory and the computer program code may be configured to, with the processor, cause the apparatus to detect the rule-copy action by detecting a motion imparted on the first device and on the second device at substantially the same time. The at least one memory and the computer program code may be configured to, with the processor, cause the apparatus to detect the rule-copy action by detecting a proximity of the first device to the second device and/or by detecting a position of the first device with respect to the second device. In some embodiments, the at least one memory and the computer program code may be configured to, with the processor, cause the apparatus to identify the second device based on participation of the second device in the rule-copy action.

[0006] The at least one memory and the computer program code may be configured to, with the processor, cause the apparatus to cause the at least one rule to be applied to the first device via communication with the second device. Additionally or alternatively, the at least one memory and the computer program code may be configured to, with the processor, cause the apparatus to cause the at least one rule to be applied to the

first device via communication with a server and/or via communication with the first device.

[0007] In other embodiments, a method and a computer program product are described for detecting a rule-copy action at a first device; identifying a second device in response to the rule-copy action, wherein the second device is configured to operate according to at least one rule; and causing the at least one rule to be applied to the first device in response to detection of the rule-copy action, so as to configure the first device to operate according to the at least one rule. The method and computer program code may be configured for detecting at least one of (a) a motion imparted on the first device and on the second device at substantially the same time; or (b) a proximity of the first device to the second device.

[0008] In some cases, a position of the first device with respect to the second device may be detected. The second device may be identified based on participation of the second device in the rule-copy action. The method and computer program code may be configured for causing the at least one rule to be applied to the first device by communicating with the second device and/or by communicating with a server. Additionally or alternatively, the at least one rule to be applied to the first device by communicating with the first device.

[0009] In still other embodiments, an apparatus is described for providing for rules that are applicable to one device to be applied to another device solely as a result of user interaction with those devices. The apparatus may include means for detecting a rule-copy action at a first device; means for identifying, via the processor, a second device in response to the rule-copy action, wherein the second device is configured to operate according to at least one rule; and means for causing the at least one rule to be applied to the first device in response to detection of the rule-copy action, so as to configure the first device to operate according to the at least one rule.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWING(S)

[0010] Having thus described certain example embodiments of the invention in general terms, reference will now be made to the accompanying drawings, which are not necessarily drawn to scale, and wherein:

[0011] FIG. 1 illustrates one example of an apparatus for applying rules for one device to another device according to an example embodiment of the present invention;

[0012] FIG. 2 illustrates a system for applying rules for one device to another device according to an example embodiment of the present invention;

[0013] FIG. 3 illustrates a schematic block diagram of a first device and/or a second device according to an example embodiment of the present invention;

[0014] FIG. 4 illustrates a schematic block diagram of a server configured to communicate with the first and second devices of FIG. 3 according to an example embodiment of the present invention;

[0015] FIG. 5A illustrates a perspective view of first and second devices prior to positioning of the devices with respect to each other to accomplish a rule-copy action according to an example embodiment of the present invention;

[0016] FIG. 5B illustrates a perspective view of the first and second devices of FIG. 5A positioned with respect to each other in a rule-copy action according to an example embodiment of the present invention; and